

On the Road

THE RELIEF ROUTE — SR 1

Issue 24

DELAWARE ROUTE 7 TO US ROUTE 113

Fall 1999

ODESSA SECTION OF SR-1 OPENING IN NOVEMBER, AS PROMISED!



View of new SR-1 highway looking north toward the C&D Canal from near Boyds Corner.

The newest section of SR-1 from south of Odessa to the C&D Canal will be officially opened in mid-November, as promised in the original construction schedule. Its opening will bring a sigh of relief to many. At one point, when the private Hardcore proposal to save St. Georges Bridge fell through because a suitable liability guarantee and finance package could not be found, the planned completion date of the Odessa Section looked to be in some doubt.

The Hardcore proposal had included the construction of entrance and exit ramps just south of the new bridge over the Canal to allow local use of the bridge without incurring tolls. Free use of the bridge was a condition of the federal legislation that ensured the Army Corps of Engineers would reimburse DelDOT \$115 million for building it.

The addition of the ramps, along with other adjustments to the highway construction contract, increased the original work load by twenty percent. Nevertheless, the project has still been completed within the original project time ("Odessa section" continues on page 4)

Highway Opening in Stages

While the new Odessa Section of SR-1 will be officially opened in mid-November, the actual change over will occur in a number of stages, starting in mid-October. In the first stage, the southbound traffic on SR-1, just south of the C&D Canal Bridge, will be diverted onto the new roadway. The existing lanes that switch southbound SR-1 traffic over to southbound U.S. 13 will be removed and a temporary connection from southbound U.S. 13 to southbound SR-1 will be opened. This will allow construction crews to connect the new northbound lanes to existing SR-1 and to finish two new ramps connecting the new highway with US 13

After this is accomplished, the second stage will divert northbound traffic south of Odessa off U.S. 13 and onto the new roadway. SR-1 traffic will be able to use the recently completed ramps to connect to U.S. 13. This will take us to mid November, when we plan to have both northbound and southbound traffic open on SR-1 with tolls being collected. At that time the interchanges at SR-299 and at Boyds Corner will also be opened.

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Delaware Department of
Transportation

Anne P. Canby
Secretary

On the Road is published periodically by the Delaware Department of Transportation and is the official newsletter of SR 1, the US Route 13 Relief Route.

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Mile STONES



The Town of St. George on the south side of the C&D Canal.

• ST. GEORGES BRIDGE UPDATE

The future of the St. Georges Bridge is still not finally decided. In June the National Trust released its list of 11 most endangered historic properties and the Bridge wasn't on it. Inclusion of the Bridge on this list would have been a major boost to those trying to save it.

The Army Corps of Engineers is expected to release a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on the Bridge about the same time this newsletter is released which will address closure and removal issues. If the EIS does not support retention of the bridge, this could well seal the fate of the bridge, even though the State of Delaware continues to maintain that it will be needed in the future. Issuance of a Record of Decision is anticipated approximately 60 days after release of the Environmental Impact Statement.

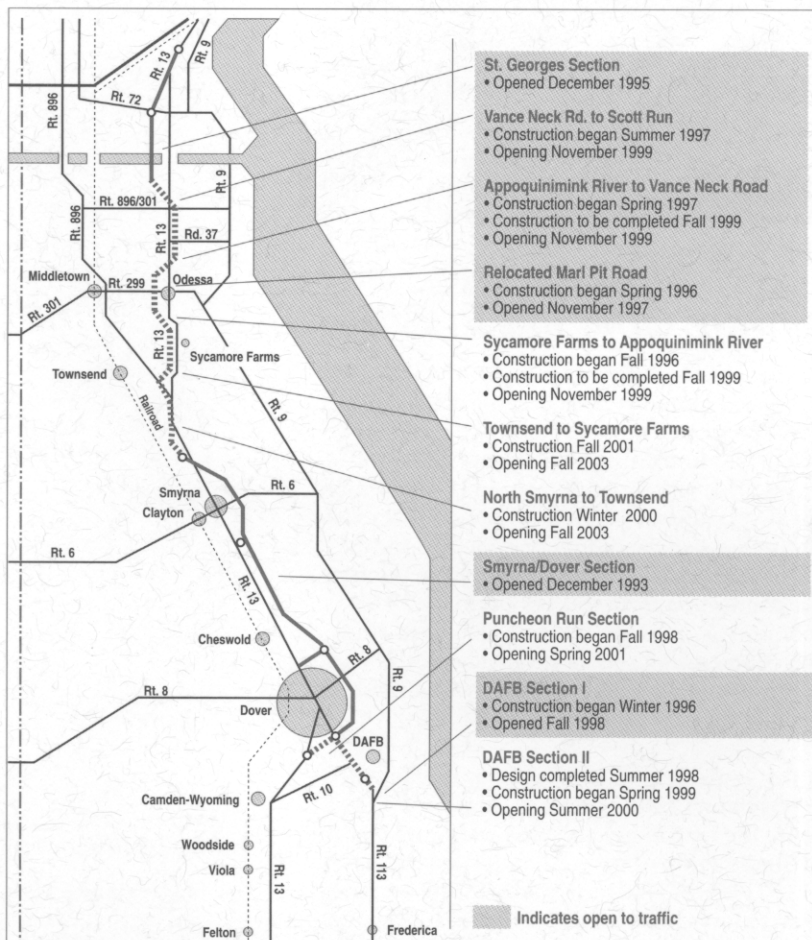
• PUNCHEON RUN NEWS:

Work on Puncheon Run is progressing on schedule, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2000. The new Puncheon Run connection will provide a diversion away from Route 10 and the Dover section of Route 13 for more than 20,000 vehicles a day.

• EZ Pass cheaper than cash. . . particularly for locals:

The new toll booth at Biddles Corner just south of the C&D Canal will collect a dollar from car drivers who choose to pay cash when both north and southbound sections of SR 1 around Odessa open in November. However, car drivers using EZ Pass will receive a 15% discount and truckers will receive a 50% discount to encourage use of the pass.

For EZ Pass holders using only the short section of the new highway between the new toll booth and Boyd's Corner there will be an even greater discount. A special reader is being installed on both the entrance and exit ramps at Boyd's Corner which will automatically give EZ Pass users much of their Biddles Corner toll back when they use this section of SR-1. With the credit, car drivers with EZ Pass will end up paying less than half the full toll to use this short stretch of new roadway and truckers will get back 75% of their full toll. ■



One PERSPECTIVE



Some of the 18 Construction Management staff now working on the northern Odessa Section, from left to right: Spencer McDowell, Dave Crow, Lisa Spartie, Les Henry, Jim Holmes, David Duke, Don Poore, Brian Norris, Elio Genoese and Greg Smoot.

OTR: You must love rainy days like today, when you don't have to be on site watching over the construction work.

Team: Not really. We haven't had a rainy day in a long time, and there is a lot of paper work we have to catch up on. We're responsible for the money we spend out here, and we have to document everything. For example, if a contractor hits an obstruction when putting in a drain and it's cheaper to move the drain a few feet rather than remove the obstruction, we have to record exactly what was done and why.

OTR: So DelDOT is pretty careful with how it spends its money on the job?

Team: That's largely why DelDOT hires inspection consultants like Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) to do this work. Out of the 18 staff out here at the moment, only Dave Duke and Don Poore are full time DelDOT employees. To ensure project management money is spent in the most efficient way possible, it is the responsibility of the on-site GPI Contract Manager, Spencer McDowell, to make sure that each of us is here only when a specific expertise like bridge building, earthwork, or electrical engineering is needed.

OTR: That must be hard on staff when you don't have any long term job security.

Team: It's just part of the construction business. Actually, Spencer, Dave and many of the others on the job are locals, born and raised here. Some of us have worked on other SR-1 Relief Route 13 contracts in various capacities from the very beginning. And fortunately, working for a large company like GPI, which does this type of work

"One Perspective" is a regular feature of On The Road. The interviews presented here provide readers with a personal, behind-the-scenes look at planning, design and construction activities associated with SR 1, the US 13 Relief Route.

For the Fall 1999 issue, One Perspective met with Dave Duke, Spencer McDowell, David Crow and a multi-talented team of experienced construction professionals who work out of a double wide trailer located in a small construction compound just south of the C&D Canal Bridge along old Route 13.

Their job is to ensure that the northern section of the new SR-1 highway between the C&D Canal and Odessa (one of three sections due to open this fall), actually gets built as DelDOT planned and designed it.

all up and down the East Coast, means that when work stops here we can usually find work elsewhere if necessary.

OTR: Do you live around here? Wouldn't being local make it hard to do this type of work since you have to deal with people directly impacted by the project?

Team: Most of the decisions have already been made by the time we see the plans and we just have to try to make the construction as painless as possible to the public. Be open and honest and treat people as we would like to be treated if we were in the same position. If we can change things to make it better for them, though, we will. For instance, we closed Road 420 for a while recently because it meant we could do the work much faster and cause less disruption to the locals over the long run. We'd be working through next summer if we hadn't. Fortunately, there are some really great people out there who, despite their own hardships, realize that what is happening is for the good of everyone.

OTR: What is the best thing about working on the new road?

Team: Building any new road where there hasn't been one before is amazing. We joke about being responsible for both knocking the trees down at the beginning of a project and planting them back again at the end. If you can envision standing in the middle of a field, there is a forest in front of you, and all of a sudden there are stakes across the field. Then the forest is cleared, and fill is brought in, sometimes piled 20 feet high, and finally there is a road, and people are using it as if it had always been there. It's really pretty neat. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

- There will be two new park - N - Ride lots along SR-1, one at Boyd's Corner and one at Odessa.
- The amount of traffic using SR-1 around Dover has doubled since it opened just five years ago.

TO OUR READERS

The State of Delaware and the project team are committed to continuing the citizen input process during the design and construction phases of the project. We invite you to write to us with questions or comments regarding *On the Road*

For More INFORMATION

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- Environmental issues: contact Joe Wutka, Assistant Director of Planning, at 302-760-2094
- Right-of-way acquisition and relocation: contact Wayne Rizzo, Chief of Real Estate, at 302-760-2220
- Construction issues: contact Tom Clements, Construction Engineer, at 302-734-9533

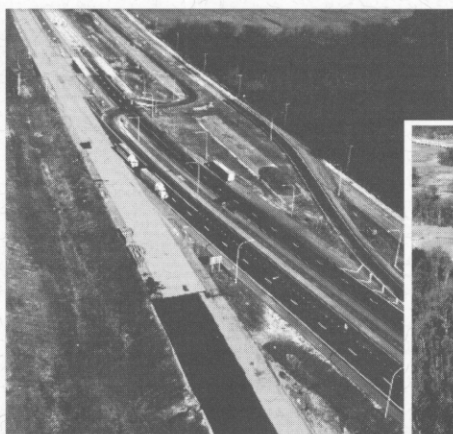
("Odessa section" continued from page 1)

frame thanks, in part, to DeIDOT's partnership approach to project management which encourages initiative and a strong relationship between the Contractors and the State.

The project has also been completed on time thanks to a very understanding local community who agreed to the temporary closure of Road 420 last spring and Lorewood Grove Road this summer to allow faster construction of the new highway. ■

("Highway Opening" continued from page 1)

Four lanes of traffic will be kept open on SR-1 throughout this period, but drivers can expect some traffic switches while the existing and new lanes are connected, and there will be a minor lane shift just north of the new Biddles Toll Plaza during most of the final stages while US 13 is carefully put back onto its original alignment. ■



Temporary connection between SR-1 & US13 south of the C & D Canal to be removed.



SR-1 to be connected to US 13 South of Odessa.